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# U.S. intelligence overseas needs shot in the arm

**IT LOOKS** like the U.S. is better at leaking secrets than it is at gathering secrets.

A lack of intelligence sources in Iran is often cited as a reason that the American embassy there was so easily stormed. The vulnerability of the U.S. Marines in Lebanon and the shortage of knowledge about the inner workings of Beirut, as evidenced in the most recent hostage crisis, may also point to a U.S. weakness at the art of espionage.

**MEANWHILE, BACK** at home, the FBI catches John A. Walker Jr., a former Navy warrant officer who apparently sold out America for 20 years before being discovered. Walker and three others, including his brother and son, are charged with espionage for allegedly selling secrets about the U.S. nuclear-submarine fleet to the Soviets. The four are called "just the tip of the iceberg" of what is considered the largest spy network in this country since the 1950s. Even before these arrests, FBI chief William Webster had announced: "We have more people charged with espionage right now than ever before in our history."

**WHAT IS MORE** disturbing, in terms of the country's security, is going on overseas. Ministers from Libya, Syria and Iran met in January in Tehran and agreed to increase terrorism against U.S. interests worldwide. Libyan Dictator Muammar Khadafy has also decided to fund an Arab terrorist group, the Organization of Arab Revolutionary Forces. The organization is pledged to "confront American imperialism."

**IT IS OVERSEAS** that the Central Intelligence Agency is charged with gathering data pertinent to U.S. interests. The job is either getting too big for the agency to handle, or it's just not doing the job. The U.S. has been blind sided in too many situations.

It's hard to defend some of the CIA's past dirty tricks — which include illegally spying on U.S. citizens, conducting drug experiments on unwitting victims and teaching torture techniques.

That history doesn't negate the present need for CIA — and the need for other intelligence agencies — to help in the fight against subversion here and abroad. It may be too late to prevent Khadafy and his henchmen from killing innocent Americans, but something needs to be done in a hurry to prevent a continuous massacre.

**MORE THAN** $200 billion is being spent annually by the U.S. or defense. It is obvious that there is more to national defense than buying hardware. The FBI has identified 500 to 600 agents of the KGB living in the U.S. Yet there are only 300 to 400 FBI agents assigned to monitor these spys. This is shocking considering that it requires four people to cover one suspect night and day.

"We don't even have a man-to-man defense," CIA Director William J. Casey says.

Congress continues to worry about buying MX missiles and "Star Wars," apparently forgetting land bound troubles. The cost of one multibillion dollar bomber could put a whole lot of agents out on the streets to tail Soviets who buy secrets, and those agents would mean much more to U.S. security than a bomber whose secrets are known by the Soviets.

**THE SPLINTERING** of Shiite militant groups demands a renewed push at gathering information in Lebanon where the U.S. effort has been weakened. Despite Reagan's new anti-terrorist policy that calls for preemtive action, the U.S. has done little to stop terrorists and has been handcuffed because it doesn't know where to strike out. The country's negligence in the intelligence field is more than just troublesome; it is dangerous.

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